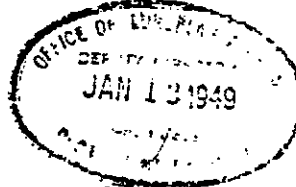


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SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

R

January 11, 1949

re The Berlin  
report

MEMORANDUM

To: EUR - Mr. Hickerson

Subject: CIA Special Evaluation No. 37 - "Present  
Soviet Objectives in the Berlin Dispute"

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I have your memorandum of December 15, together with the memorandum from O, Mr. Wilds, of December 20, in which you both comment on the subject report.

I would advise that the whole problem of concurrence in CIA intelligence estimates has been and still is under review. As the arrangement now operates, it is unsatisfactory for the Intelligence area of the Department and is undoubtedly a major cause of the difficulties which you have experienced in connection with CIA reports. The particular report to which you referred falls into the category of current intelligence (as opposed to coordinated intelligence) and is not submitted to the Department prior to issuance. This we are trying to correct. Our intelligence analysts took serious exception to this report, even as did you. We are notifying CIA of our disagreement with the report, including your comments.

The related problem of concurrence in CIA reports which are submitted to the Department prior to issuance is also under review, and we hope to be able to improve the system so that any intelligence estimate which is given top governmental circulation will reflect the views of the Department where appropriate.

I need hardly say that we agree entirely that no intelligence estimate, whether it be CIA or State, should normally imply an evaluation of current policy, but if it does, it should have the positive concurrence of the appropriate office in the Department. It is furthermore our firm intention that, whether in the production of our own intelligence reports or in connection with concurrences in CIA coordinated intelligence reports, the resources of the geographic offices should be thoroughly utilized.

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Spec. Asst. to Sec. of State  
The Secretary of State  
Mr. Hickerson

For you




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For your information we are attaching a draft of a working paper prepared in our Divisions which goes into the intricacies of the concurrence problem.

  
W. Park Armstrong, Jr.

cc: O - Mr. Wilds  
S/S - Mr. Humelsine

R:PHowe:mvv

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Jan. 10, 1949

THE PROBLEM OF CONCURRENCES IN CIA PAPERS

There has been increasing evidence of Departmental concern with respect to principles and practices under which CIA reports and estimates are prepared and issued, especially those which bear a statement of concurrence or dissent by R. This memorandum, therefore, will undertake to discuss present procedures and to indicate some of the problems associated with the theory and practice of producing so-called "National," or joint inter-agency, intelligence.

I. Basic Directives

The Directives of the National Security Council impose upon CIA the responsibility to produce "national intelligence" (NSCID 1), which is defined as integrated departmental intelligence that covers the broad aspects of national policy, is of concern to more than one department, and transcends the exclusive competence of any one department (NSCID 3). Under the same directive, the State Department, through its organization for Research and Intelligence, is primarily responsible for the production of intelligence in the political, sociological and cultural fields, and in certain aspects of the economic field. National Intelligence (with certain exceptions below noted) must carry a notation of participation by the intelligence agencies of State, Army, Navy and Air, either in the form of a "concurrence," or a statement of "dissent," with reasons therefor (DCI 3/2).

II. Production Procedures

The inter-departmental agreements which regulate the production of National Intelligence, arrived at after long and arduous discussions, are designed to insure maximum participation by the departments and consequently

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a minimum duplication of effort on the part of CIA. Thus, technically:

- (1) CIA should undertake national intelligence projects only when they concern the intelligence responsibilities of more than one department.
- (2) CIA should refer to the appropriate department any self-conceived or requested intelligence project which lies wholly within that department's functional field of responsibility.
- (3) CIA should utilize or request finished departmental intelligence reports in preparing national intelligence, which thus should be a fusion of contributions from the specialized agencies.
- (4) CIA should initiate a project only after joint consultation and planning (including agreement as to priorities).
- (5) CIA should submit finished drafts for the concurrence or dissent of each of the four departmental intelligence agencies.

### III. Concurrence Procedures

The procedures required to put into effect point (5) above are of primary interest to the Department, and merit treatment in further detail:

- (1) Agencies may act upon CIA drafts in only three ways: (a) concurrence, (b) dissent, or (c) specification that the subject lies wholly outside the agency's field of responsibility. Dissent implies the right of the agency to include in the final paper a formulation of its objections.
- (2) Every effort is made to achieve agreement, so as to avoid split papers. CIA welcomes incidental comment even when the agency concurs. If an agency dissents, CIA always meets with its representatives to discuss differences and to resolve, or at least minimize them by negotiating adjustment of the draft text.

(3) Dissent/

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- (3) Dissent is persisted in only if the point at issue is considered substantial by the agency, or to be misleading to a degree that is dangerous. To prevent infinite haggling over details, the word "substantial" is highly emphasized; form of presentation, wording, and non-essential inaccuracies are not the responsibility of concurring agencies nor a basis for dissent.
- (4) R endeavors to represent a departmental position in broad terms by consulting policy officers whenever an analyst detects in a CIA draft points which he knows to be, or thinks conceivably might be, of major concern to them.

#### IV. Problems with CIA

Manifestly, the organization required to bring to bear upon National Intelligence the best experience of all relevant experts must be elaborate. In theory, the principles and procedures indicated above should suffice. In practice, however, a number of problems remain only partially solved and some knowledge may enable the Department to contribute towards a solution, or at least to understand the difficulties of the present situation.

- (1) In interpretation of the National Security Act and NSC Directives, the Director of CIA produces so-called "current intelligence" reports which, for the stated reasons of urgency and timeliness, are prepared and distributed without prior departmental clearance. Such reports include the Daily and Weekly CIA Summaries, the monthly "Review of the World Situation" (requested by NSC), and occasional "Special Evaluations" and "Intelligence Memoranda." Although R is willing to cut red tape as far as possible to permit speedy production, it is likely that a satisfactorily quick concurrence process

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"Current intelligence" is defined as "that spot information or intelligence of all types and forms of immediate interest and value to operating or policy staffs, which is used by them, usually without the delays incident to complete evaluation or interpretation" (NSCID 3).

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Our material of this type will be difficult. A possible, but similarly unsatisfactory solution will be to try to arrange for post-facto circulation of dissenting statements to the same list of recipients if any paper arouses serious disagreement.

- (2) The Director of CIA, acting for the NSC, controls the distribution of CIA reports. Distribution varies, but most reports, coordinated or otherwise, reach very high executive levels as well as many areas of government. Clearly an adjustment of dissemination often resolves problems associated with "sensitive" material, but to arrange for joint controls with an independent agency is, of course, a delicate matter. It appears to me that only by, at least, participation in the planning and production of papers offering sufficient assurances of correlating CIA papers with departmental positions.

- (3) Instead of preparing national intelligence from finished intelligence papers contributed by departmental agencies, CIA/ORE usually develops its reports from departmental raw materials--cables, despatches and the like--and has built up a large staff for this purpose. Originally developed to meet CIA's responsibility for surveying and evaluating departmental intelligence production, later increased to handle marginal projects which departmental staffs were unable to undertake, this growing staff has inevitably itself advanced into the field of original production. It must be frankly stated that the consequent overlap and duplication are far more extensive in the fields of responsibility of the Department of State than in those of the military. The central problem

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revolves around this O&E staff, which produces original papers from much the same raw materials that R uses. Essential aspects of this problem are:

- a. Finished drafts often arrive in R with urgent deadlines for action, which may interfere with going commitments for work undertaken by R for the Department. Until some arrangement is made for agreement upon joint priorities in the initiation of such drafts, this problem of scheduling work in concurrences within the Departments will continue to be bothersome.
- b. Drafts come to R from CIA in finished form and often previously unseen by Departmental analysts. In consequence, it is difficult and time-consuming to effect changes in the general quality, basic assumptions, or "slant" of the papers - in other words, to re-write rather than to correct occasional factual details. The only successful solution will be for CIA to combine its papers out of draft contributions from the departments, with appropriate consultations between departments at the outset, to insure agreement upon basic assumptions and approach.
- c. No adequate provision exists for consultation as to the need and desirability in terms of technical or policy considerations for a paper to be issued at all. The device of insisting upon a devastating dissent is difficult to use under conditions of inter-agency comity.

V. Problems

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V. Problems within the Department

Establishing of a departmental position in concurrences or dissents raises some interesting questions:

- (1) R faces the choice between overly burdening policy officers with each paper or risking ignorance of pertinent fact and policy. It is now a firm principle that R will consult policy officers whenever there is any suspicion that they will be concerned, and R's record in adjusting its own papers to the requirements of the Department promises that this provision will suffice to coordinate Departmental views successfully.
- (2) The concept of what may be "dangerously" misleading cannot, of course, be removed wholly from the realm of subjective judgment. R's analysts themselves often worry over the appearance of blanket approval conveyed by a concurrence. They can only seek the cooperation of the Department in endeavoring to distinguish between the essential and the unessential in criticizing CIA papers.
- (3) Intelligence research, to be useful, must focus upon policy problems. The danger is that it may intrude upon the formulation of policy. R makes every effort to correct any seeming tendency in its own or CIA's papers to verge upon argument which recommends action. Clearly an exposition of facts, if thus controlled, of good quality, and limited in distribution as required by degrees of "sensitiveness," can only be helpful to policy officers. Misunderstandings may arise, however, as, for example, when a minor position must be sacrificed because of broader considerations; presentation of the facts on this minor situation may look incompatible with the broad policy actually adopted. Clearly, too, many policies involve some letting of chips fall where they may; it is nonetheless desirable to have sound

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intelligence on those chips. An understanding of the impersonal, non-argumentative function of intelligence may help to overcome this complication. On the other hand, cooperation of policy officers in making clear to R analysts their policy problems will allow R the better to insure that the analysis of a segment of any topic makes reference to the broader setting.

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Of the value of national intelligence which combines military and civilian points of view there should be no question. The organization for producing this intelligence is new and subject to the usual growing pains. It is hoped that this memorandum will give policy officers of the Department insight into the problems in this field and help them. The officers of R and CIB will be glad to discuss details with any members of the Department who have further questions.

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